



FAVI begins their annual fundraising drive this week

Thursday, August 23 was the commencement of the annual fundraising for the Fundacion Arubano di Esnan Visualmente Incapacita, (FAVI, Foundation for Visually Impaired,) which will last over the next few months, in the hope that they will collect their required budgeting. FAVI, under Director Mieke de Droog, is a self-sustaining foundation, which does not rely on a government allotment to provide their services and activities to Aruba's one thousand visually impaired residents.

The new center at Primavera was built on donations, many of which are collected by the team of dedicated volunteers that were on hand for the announcement of this year's drive. FAVI President Willemien Thiel welcomed and commended Ahat van Vliet, Clara de Waal, Miep v/d Burgh and Frieda Booi for their unstinting effort through the years to see that FAVI can continue its important work. Mieke de Droog took the opportunity to single out Miep and Clara, the two volunteers that collected the most money for the center last year, and present them with gift certificates in appreciation.

Clara de Waal also sent out a plea to a new generation to take up the gauntlet of fundraising, as many of the volunteers that have given their time over the last twenty years to this worthy foundation are now quite elderly, and it is a demanding task.

FAVI provides important testing for visual problems and therapy for all ages, and early detection in babies is very important in preserving their eyesight and preventing complete blindness. In the last year, they opened up a "children's room," which provides a special environment that provides visually impaired youngsters important stimulus. They additionally offer free classes in computer, special reading equipment and modified monitors, and job training. Social events, handicraft classes, and an environment that helps the visually impaired of Aruba to be self-sustaining productive individuals are all part of their program, and financed strictly by donations.

Last year, the volunteers raised 70,000 florins during their annual drive, which just barely met the budget for transportation, utilities, and supplies; with the increased cost of living, this year they need to raise more. They ask that individuals and companies be generous when a FAVI volunteer comes knocking at the door, or to contact FAVI to make a donation by calling telephone #582-5222 or 582-5051.